

No. 1370/67

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
27 July 1967

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Communist Capabilities in Haiti

Introduction

1. The Communist movement in Haiti is divided and weak and has only a limited capability for sponsoring anti-Duvalier activities at the present time. We do not believe the Haitian Communists will play a significant role in a post-Duvalier situation unless near anarchy develops in the country. Communist opportunities after Duvalier will be greatly affected by the manner of his demise. More than likely, some kind of "palace coup" will occur which would present the Communists with a fait accompli. They would have little room for maneuver unless widespread opposition developed against the new ruler or rulers. If the new government could not soon establish its authority, the Communists' capability for exploiting the situation would markedly increase.

2. Haitian Communists inside and outside Haiti may number as many as 650. Only 125 of them can be considered dedicated, hard-core Communists; many are in exile. Nevertheless, Communist leaders, witnessing the erosion of the Duvalier regime during the past nine months, have embarked on a program to train cadres, hoping that they will be able to take advantage of any disorganization which might follow Duvalier's demise.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of National Estimates and the Clandestine Services.

3. Until about a year ago the two Communist parties in Haiti were the Party of Popular Accord (PEP), a Moscow-oriented party, and the Popular Party of National Liberation (PPLN), a nationalist and essentially Castroist party. The PPLN has been in disarray since a government crack-down in mid-1965, when its leadership was arrested or driven into exile. Nevertheless, the party continued to exist until it was succeeded in mid-1966 by a more militant Communist party referred to by its Creole initials as PUDA (United Haitian Democratic Party). Recent information suggests that the PEP and the PUDA are collaborating to some degree in a "united front," both inside and outside of Haiti.

Current Situation

4. The total membership of the PEP is believed to range from 200 to 500. The identities of current Central Committee members are unknown, but Gerald Brisson and Raymond Jean-Francois appear to be leading PEP members. The PEP's strategy is to follow a united front policy, seeking alliances with other "progressive" groups inside and outside of Haiti such as PUDA. PEP and its front activities are coordinated by its representative in Mexico, Gerard Pierre-Charles. Most of the PEP's funds come from the USSR, but it has also received financial support from the French and Italian parties as well as the Cubans and a Communist faction in the Dominican Republic.

5. In an attempt to re-establish itself after the regime's repressive actions in mid-1965, the PPLN changed its name to the Haitian United Democratic Party (PUDA). Its leaders are believed to be Roger Gaillard, Yves Barbot, Lionel Loubeau, and Frank Nau. The PUDA may have been involved in the antiregime demonstrations in St. Marc, Arcahaie, and Gonaives last fall. PUDA members and sympathizers in Haiti may number as many as 150. The PUDA has little political influence among Haitian exiles, although it does have contacts across the border in the Dominican Republic with some members of the former "Constitutionalist" forces there. The PUDA has at least one leader in the Dominican Republic recruiting Haitians located there. Inside Haiti, the PUDA has linked

up with a small Marxist-oriented Catholic political group and a pro-Chinese group to form a front to counter PEP's coalition. There is some evidence of cooperation between the PEP and PUDA groups, but the extent of this collaboration is not clear.

6. So far, the Haitian Communists are believed to possess only a limited number of arms, probably no more than a few revolvers and home made bombs. The PEP claims credit, however, for the three bombs which exploded in Port-au-Prince in mid-April.

International Contacts and Assistance

7. One PEP leader is stationed in the Dominican Republic and acts as an operations and support officer. He recruits Haitians living in the Dominican Republic who are willing to return to Haiti and arranges for them to receive training in weapons handling. The PEP maintains a clandestine communications system with its officers in the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic as well as in Mexico.

8. Cuba beams 14 hours of propaganda radio broadcasts to Haiti each week. It has also provided some training, but only to a small number of Haitian revolutionaries. Some Cuban funds may also be reaching one or two of the more militant Haitian exile organizations.

9. The USSR has provided financial assistance to the PEP for a number of years, but has also trained some Haitian Communists in schools in the Soviet Union. In 1966, 15 Haitians reportedly were being trained in Marxist doctrine and guerrilla warfare in the USSR; the Soviets also maintain contacts with leading Communist Haitian exile organizations.

10. Two groups of Haitian Communists located in Paris are in contact with the Chinese Communists there, [REDACTED] and are now receiving assistance from them. One of these groups, led by Fred Baptiste who traveled to Peking in the spring of 1967, has been promised financial support and training. A few of Baptiste's militants are reportedly in transit to Peking to receive training.

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11. Duvalier's control apparatus has undergone considerable erosion in recent weeks. About one fifth of his military household has been replaced, with a concomitant weakening of the regime's repressive powers. Nevertheless, the conclusion reached in National Intelligence Estimate 86.1-66, The Situation and Prospects in Haiti, of October 1966 is still largely valid today: "The two Communist parties are too small and weak to be able to contend for power even in a disorderly situation following Duvalier's departure. We doubt that outside Communist support--from Castro, the Soviets, or Haitian Communist exiles--would be forthcoming on a significant scale."

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